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(Original Signature of Member)

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES.

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Department of Veterans Affairs National Cemetery Administration employees, volunteers, and veterans' service organizations that perform funeral honors and memorial honor details should be permitted to recite the 13 steps to fold an American flag (known as the "13-fold recital") at any national cemetery if requested by the family of the deceased.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. LATOURETTE (for himself and Mr. CALVERT) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Department of Veterans Affairs National Cemetery Administration employees, volunteers, and veterans' service organizations that perform funeral honors and memorial honor details should be permitted to recite the 13 steps to fold an American flag (known as the "13-fold recital") at any national cemetery if requested by the family of the deceased.

Whereas the Department of Veterans Affairs National Cemetery Administration (hereinafter referred to as the

“NCA”) honors veterans with final resting places in national shrines and with lasting tributes that commemorate their service to the Nation;

Whereas the NCA currently maintains more than 2.8 million grave sites at 125 national cemeteries in 39 States and Puerto Rico;

Whereas in fiscal year 2006 nearly 97,000 interments were conducted at national cemeteries;

Whereas in fiscal year 2006 nearly 72 percent of interments were at the Nation’s 20 busiest national cemeteries in Riverside, California, Florida, Calverton, New York, Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, Fort Snelling, Minnesota, Fort Sam Houston, Texas, Fort Logan, Colorado, Willamette, Oregon, Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas, National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona, Houston, Texas, Fort Rosecrans, California, Abraham Lincoln, Illinois, Tahoma, Washington, Massachusetts, San Joaquin Valley, California, Long Island, New York, Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania, Ohio Western Reserve, and Great Lakes, Michigan;

Whereas the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 (Public Law 106–65) requires, upon a family’s request, that every eligible veteran receive a military funeral honors ceremony, to include folding and presenting the United States burial flag and the playing of Taps, and the law further stipulates that veterans’ organizations may assist in providing military funeral honors;

Whereas the folding and presentation of the United States flag is a solemn and important moment for families of the deceased, and can be done in silence or accompanied

by a recitation of the 13 steps taken to fold the flag and the meaning behind each step;

Whereas veterans' service organizations across the Nation often provide funeral honors at national cemeteries, including the folding and presentation of the flag, the recitation of the flag-folding steps and the playing of Taps;

Whereas the NCA, in late September 2007, banned the recitation of the flag-folding ceremony by employees and volunteers, including those from veterans' service organizations, at all national cemeteries;

Whereas this policy is unnecessary and insulting to veterans who bleed and die for the United States flag; and

Whereas the choice to have the flag-folding ceremony read aloud should rest with the family of the deceased, not the NCA: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the House of Rep-
2 resentatives that the Department of Veterans Affairs Na-
3 tional Cemetery Administration employees, volunteers,
4 and veterans' service organizations that perform funeral
5 honors and memorial honor details should be permitted
6 to recite the 13 steps to fold an American flag (known
7 as the "13-fold recital") at any national cemetery if re-
8 quested by the family of the deceased.